

Introduced by Senator Perata
(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Nunez)
(Coauthor: Senator Ackerman)
(Coauthor: Assembly Member Villines)

March 13, 2008

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 92—Relative to the Associated Chaplains in California State Service.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 92, as introduced, Perata. Associated Chaplains in California State Service.

This measure would commend 41 years of professional service by the Associated Chaplains in California State Service in assisting chaplains in implementing religious programming and training within the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, the State Department of Developmental Services, the State Department of Mental Health, and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, The First Amendment of the United States
- 2 Constitution assures the free exercise of religion; and
- 3 WHEREAS, The California Constitution also guarantees the
- 4 exercise of religious freedom without discrimination or preference;
- 5 and
- 6 WHEREAS, United States Supreme Court decisions affirm that
- 7 institutionalized persons should be enabled to practice the religion
- 8 of their choice; and
- 9 WHEREAS, Chaplains in state service manage and direct all
- 10 religious programming within juvenile and adult facilities, prisons,

1 developmental centers, hospitals, and assisted living facilities
2 operated by the state, and invite the active assistance of staff
3 members in each institution as essential elements in the success
4 of every religious program; and

5 WHEREAS, Chaplains in state service are ordained or licensed,
6 and endorsed by associated religious bodies that require a high
7 standard of confidentiality in their work; and

8 WHEREAS, Substantial positive public benefits result from
9 religious practice and programming within state juvenile facilities,
10 prisons, developmental centers, hospitals, mental health and
11 veterans hospitals and assisted living centers operated by the state
12 department of veterans affairs; these benefits include reduced stress
13 levels within the institutions and improved institutional
14 performance by reducing conflicts and violence; and

15 WHEREAS, Addressing spiritual needs of inmates and patients
16 who are confined in juvenile facilities or state prisons or who reside
17 in developmental centers, and hospitals presents unique challenges
18 to the public officers, chaplains, and religious groups; and

19 WHEREAS, Special relationships exist between the larger
20 community and the unique environment in juvenile facilities, state
21 prisons, state hospitals, and state care facilities; and

22 WHEREAS, The exercise of professionalism and confidentiality
23 is an essential aspect of the relationship between family members,
24 wards, prisoners, clients, patients, and staff; and

25 WHEREAS, Chaplains' contacts with family members and
26 volunteers in the community play an important role in the spiritual
27 health of wards, prisoners, clients, and patients; and

28 WHEREAS, The Associated Chaplains in California State
29 Service ("ACCSS") was established in 1967; and

30 WHEREAS, ACCSS is the recognized professional training
31 organization that provides service to the departments of the
32 executive branch of government in cooperation with faith
33 communities, and, for 40 years has provided yearly training
34 conferences and other opportunities for professional training and
35 growth of chaplains; and

36 WHEREAS, ACCSS remains committed to the continued
37 spiritual and professional support of our chaplains as they seek to
38 improve the welfare of wards, prisoners, patients, clients, and
39 employees of state institutions; now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
2 *thereof concurring,* That the legislature commends 41 years of
3 professional service by the Associated Chaplains in California
4 State Service in assisting chaplains in implementing religious
5 programming and training within the Department of Corrections
6 and Rehabilitation, the State Department of Developmental
7 Services, the State Department of Mental Health, and the
8 Department of Veterans Affairs; and be it further
9 *Resolved,* That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
10 this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

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